



**SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**  
Washington, DC 20423

*Office of Economics, Environmental Analysis and Administration*

#EO 299  
JRW

August 7, 2006

Ronnie Lupe, Chairman  
White Mountain Apache Tribe  
P.O. Box 700  
Whiteriver, AZ 85941

RE: STB Finance Docket No. 34836, Arizona Eastern Railway—Construction and Operation—In Graham County, Arizona.

Dear Chairman Lupe:

On August 4, 2006, the Arizona Eastern Railway (AZER) filed a petition with the Surface Transportation Board (Board) requesting authority to construct and operate a 10-mile rail line in Graham County, Arizona (see Figure 1, enclosed). This proposed rail line would connect Phelps Dodge's proposed San Juan mining operation with an existing 113.5 AZER line that operates between Miami and Bowie, AZ. Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 as amended (NEPA) and the Board's environmental rules, the Board's Section of Environmental Analysis (SEA) will prepare an environmental document that evaluates the potential environmental effects of the proposed project and the reasonable and feasible alternatives.

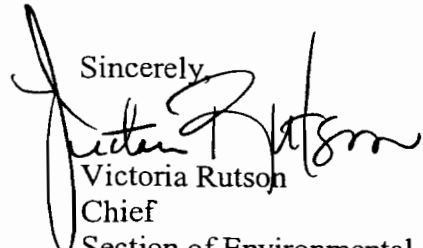
This project is located within the area of historical affiliation defined by the White Mountain Apache Tribe. The Board is very concerned with Native American interest in archaeological sites and sacred and traditional cultural places that may be located within the proposed project area. Please inform us if you have questions and/or concerns about the proposed undertaking and if you would like to consult on this project. We would appreciate receiving your response within 30 days after delivery of this letter, in order to incorporate your comments into the scope of the study, as appropriate.

William Self Associates, Inc. (WSA), of Tucson, AZ, is serving as SEA's independent third-party consultant in this process, and will work under SEA's sole directing control and supervision to assist SEA in the preparation of the environmental document. Westland Resources, Inc. will conduct a Class I and Class III Cultural Resources Inventory of the proposed alignment and alternatives as required for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended.

Please send your comments to:

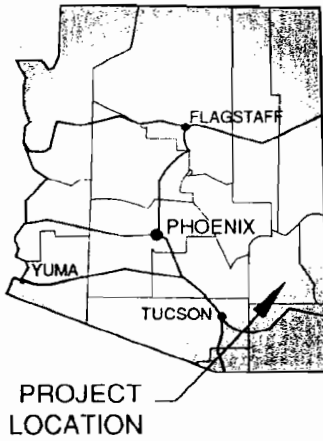
John C. Raveslout, Ph.D.  
WSA, Inc.  
2424 E. Broadway, Blvd., Suite 100  
Tucson, Arizona 85719

If you should have any questions about this project, please do not hesitate to contact John Raveslout at 520-624-0101 or Diana Wood, SEA Project Manager, at 202-565-1552.

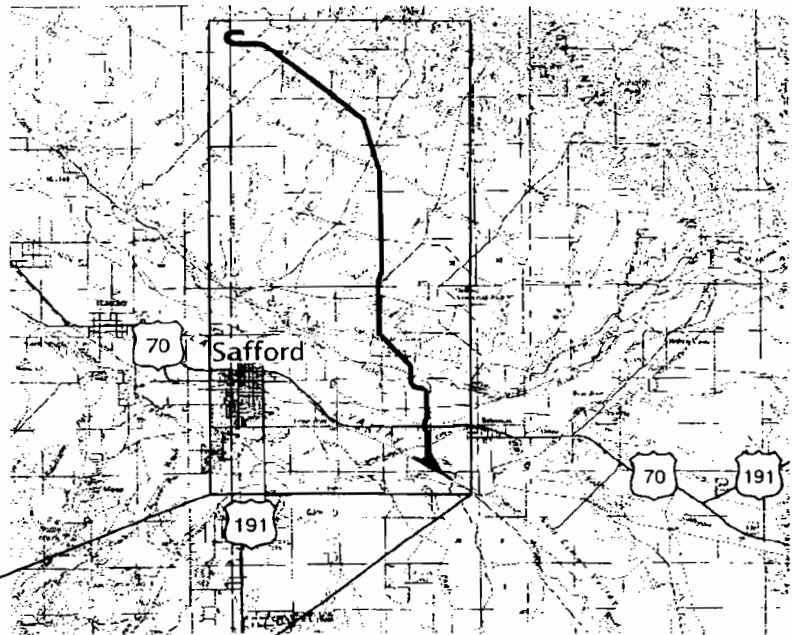
Sincerely,  
  
Victoria Rutson  
Chief  
Section of Environmental Analysis

Enclosure

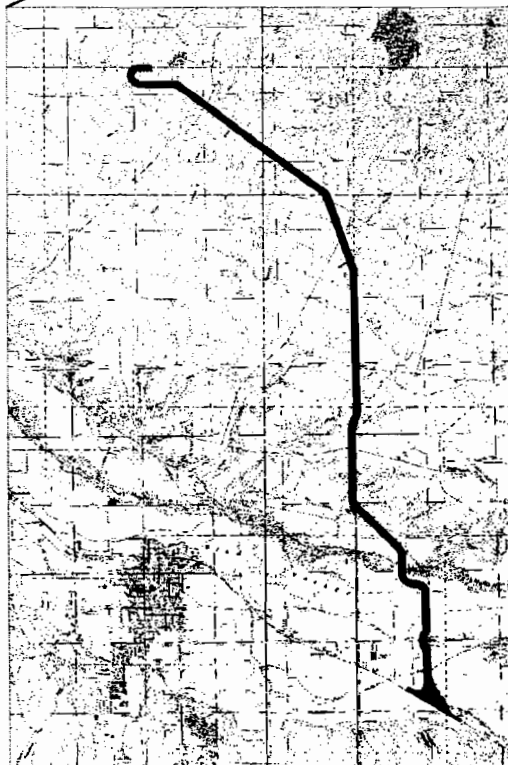
# ARIZONA



## Portion of Graham County



Safford 1:100,000 USGS Quadrangle.



T.6S., R.26E., Portion Sections 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 15, 22, 23, 26, 34 & 35.  
T.7S., R.26E., Portion Sections 3, 11, 14, 23, 24, & 25.  
Graham County, Arizona,  
Weber Peak & Safford 1:24,000 USGS Quadrangles.

0' 6800' 13600'  
APPROX. SCALE: 1" = 13600'



## PROPOSED ALIGNMENT ARIZONA EASTERN SAFFORD BRANCH PROJECT

VICINITY MAP  
Figure 1